

I'm dead now,
but things are fine.
I'm not that upset about it;
I have no one to blame but myself.

Everything started at
Pete's Sporting Goods.
I spent well over eighty bucks
on tennis balls and one large duffle bag.

In the parking lot I emptied
all the canisters into the bag
and tried to decide if new
tennis balls smell more like babies or Sharpies.

I threw the bag in the back of my pickup
and headed downtown.
I left the radio off and
listened to my heart beat.

The traffic was light, so I
made it to 12th and Front
while most people were just finishing
their lunch break.

I stopped my truck right there
in the middle of the intersection,
climbed up into the bed and
put the strap of the duffle over my right shoulder.

I steadied the bulk of the bag
against my hip and unzipped it.
The tennis balls glowed like
poppies above moist soil.

The first ball hit the windshield
of some guy's newish Camry.
He promptly got out and cursed at me.
My second throw knocked his glasses off.

Throws three through twelve went,
with varying levels of ferocity, towards
horns being honked. The thirteenth throw hit
an alderman leaving the smoothie place.

I couldn't help but yelp with joy
every time a ball met its mark.
By the time the cops showed up
My bag was past half-empty.

At first they didn't draw their guns,
but I hit Sergeant Willis in the crotch
with a two-seam fastball. That quickly
dissolved any goodwill between the police and I.

It turns out, as I was negotiating with
the cops, or rather, as I was dispensing
bright yellow fuzz balls in a deviant manner,
good-doer Mike Redding snuck up behind me.

Tire iron in hand, he crept into
my pick-up's bed as I was cocking my arm
for what would be
its ultimate toss.

Mike got two months of jail time
and a year of probation.
I got a shattered skull and
died from the blunt trauma.

What's funny
is that I don't remember a crack or a pop.
Just one thud,
understated.

THUD

Young Man 1: **Yo, Banana Boy!**

The Robot slowly turns to the men, who have now stopped walking.

Robot: **Name: He-Man.**

The second young man walks up to the robot, obviously trying to be friendly, and attempts to shake his hand.

Young Man 2: **Bob.**

The Robot drops his banana peel, now void of it's meaty spine, into the extended hand of the second young man. the audience may assume the actual banana is now mushed up and stuck to the inside of the canal which acts as the inside of the mouth part of what could be considered the robot's "head". The first young man laughs hysterically, at his human friend, as the curtain closes.

II.

Curtain not so much opens, but more rises, from ground to ceiling, to reveal our beloved Robot sitting in full lotus position on the empty stage. A Tissue box sits two feet to his immediate right. His eyes are closed. He speaks, as his eyes open, moving upwards towards the ceiling, followed by his head, as if he is praying.

Robot:

**?Are those Garages, oh Tera?...Garnet Foods do often rag.
Red lost egg gets older... But to hate God, do get a hot tub.**

The robot pauses, and rises his hulking metal frame. He steps to his left and raises his left arm, pontificating, almost...

**Sex at noon taxes.....race car.....
Radar.....don't nod.....put on sin okay, tit-yak, on is not up!
.....to rot, sis, is to rot**

The robot raises his right hand, and moves three paces to his right, and STOMP, squishes the tissue box..

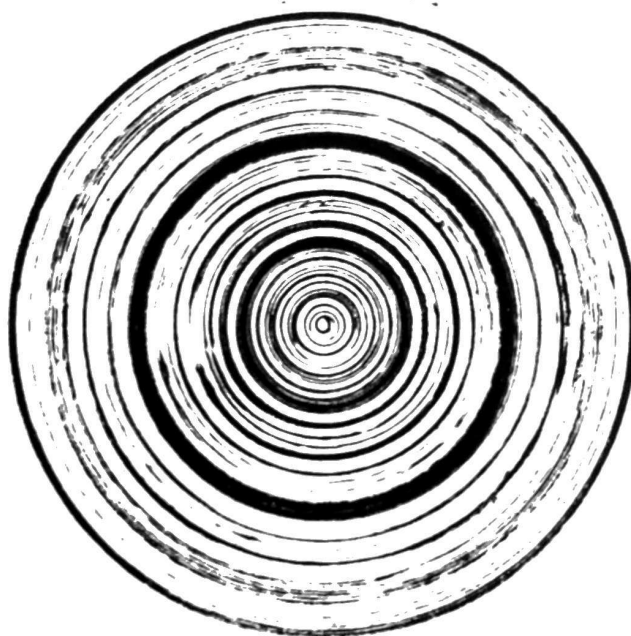
Rise to vote, Sir.....Rise to vote, Sir.....

The curtain is let go and slams to the ground. All lights in the house go out. FIN



MANAGING GRIEF
Ten Pointless Points
Plus
One Irreverency

1. Don't defer your grief. Avoid the "Scarlet O'Hara Complex."
2. Accept the loss a piece at a time, but start as quickly as possible. Unwrap the tentacles from around your heart one at a time, but get started on the "scar of mend" as soon as the numbness wears off.
3. Avoid unnecessary changes and try to maintain a reasonable schedule.
4. Admit you are angry and that the world is not necessarily fair. You need to vomit, so do it before you try to eat more food.
5. Admit you are frightened. Frightened of ...
6. Accept regressions such as the anniversary syndrome when the scab gets torn off the wound. Grief work is zig-zag, not linear.
7. Don't get into new relationships before healing from the lost relationship. Substitutes generally don't wear well.
8. Find a balance between being around people and solitude. It is highly probable that we maximize growth under two conditions—pain and solitude. Theodore Roethke once wrote, "In a dark time the eye begins to see." Grief is a painful opportunity, so you might as well take advantage of it.
9. You are not alone and don't get intoxicated trying to make yourself too unique. The "Nobody has ever suffered like me." line may give you meaning during a period of drift, but it isolates you from the very people upon whom you are dependent for support. Don't paint yourself into a corner.
10. All of you is worth something if you will only own it. It is a random universe to which you bring meaning, and grief, to be reasonably resolved, is a game of no game.
11. Be as gentle to yourself as you would be to someone else who was in as much pain as you are. Peter DeVries wrote, "Blessed are they who comfort, for they too have mourned." Try to remember that grief is the pain we pay for the moments that make life worth living.



May I tell you of a story, but first a very simple rule:
No matter what the event, the affect, or motive to be proved,
Take all responsibility, every action thought, and wish.

We'll begin as a tale, because their beginnings are always plain.
A lover's spell has come undone, and cant be found a mend.
Over there one hurted figure sits aloft in pregnant fruit tree,
The other in a lower glen contemplative at creek side bend.

The characters are set, the situation becoming clear,
But the setting is somehow wrong, not descriptive,
A funny bend and not quite near.

To science fiction, for the measure, a more familiar barometer.
A one man crew, takes on a ship no longer built for two.
His training lost without counter point, the message foreign code,
The problem drops degree by degree on thermometer.

Mood is set, example stuck, but the relevance is faint,
More generic or ornate? For this lets move to hero's speech
In mythology are the clues.

The tiny ship is cast aloft now a vessel for sea and fish,
Its fate is rest upon a cloud with beard and spade it sits,
Broods upon a magic trip to win love's twice return,
But gods are not a cleaver bunch, with mantras "Let it burn."

Do not say we are like Odysseus, the voyage outlasts the fool.
For We are sent with a rule: Take all responsibility,
Every action thought, and wish.

And now our story comes return, not by journalist or myth.
Allegory gentrified, missing steps a plot a twist. May I tell you
Of a story, minus the meat the skin or pith.

The breakup



Sco Mo

p_ause@hotmail.com

The following is a truncated recounting of the story of the first days of **Howard The Chicken** (as it was told to me, in momentous pieces, while driving in a fuel efficient automobile, in the throws of a "roadtrip"). Suggested titles of a made for TV movie are; "I know my first name is Howard", "Duck for a Day", and the aforementioned "Howard The Chicken".

About five miles NorthEast of the main section of a burgeoning mountain town in California called Placerville (or Hangtown, or P-Ville, if you're really comfortable with yourself), there is a paved vehicular pathway called New Town Road. Off of this lovely rural route, there is a relatively small plot of country land that holds the longtime name of The Fleming Jones Homestead. The Ranch portion is now called the Robin's Nest Ranch (website www.robinsnestranch.com) and appears to be actively raising miniature horses nowadays. Sitting in the middle of this pastoral place is a building that has a pleasant mountain way of still being called The Fleming Jones Homestead. It was sometime in the booming 1980's that this building, purported to be built in 1883, was made into a bed and breakfast. It was made so by the lovely woman who bought the place at that time. Janice. She grew roses. Wonderful Roses. Roses that have been winning prizes for years. Roses that people come to see when they can. When this lovely Janice Rose met an irresistibly dashing man whom she wanted to marry and move to Washington state to be with, her first thought was (possibly), "oh shit, my roses." So, Janice enlisted the services of Michelle. Michelle, mother of my Wife. I know not how long Michelle and Janice Rose had known each other, but it came to pass that at the beginning of the 1990's decade, Michelle, my wife, her sister, and Michelle's Michael, their daddy, all moved into the Bed and Breakfast building there. The Fleming Jones Homestead, and began to live their familial existence on this Ranch. The place ceased being a Bed and Breakfast, as running a family operation on top of taking care of a Ranch of any size (Michelle's obligation in return for the occupation of the property) is enough work to fill any given pleasant mountain day (and especially the non-pleasant ones!). So, Michelle's family had themselves a farm. And on this Farm they had some animals. E eye E eye Oh....sorry. there was a donkey donkey here and a pony pony there. Here a chicken, there a duck, a thousand roses, what the Ffff.....sorry. Seriously, there were those animals and my adolescent wife loved every one (and still talks fondly of them). As she explains it:

There were Five Donkeys. Maria was the oldest. If one were to put a human personality stereotype on the Donkey (as is entertaining to do, to be sure), she would be the slightly out of shape, seen some action, little stinky but why should she care at this point, sort of old wise aunt (the sort of old wise aunt that is too crotchety to actively share most of her wisdom). Her Eyebrows were very scruff. Dare I say, scruffus to the maximus. She would totter around and bleat for no apparent reason. Cranky old Donkey She was. The two not so cranky Donkeys that could be called "in their prime", Carrob and Amadeus, were in love. Well, as in love, I suppose, as two adult donkeys on a small farm could be, and they had some Donkey sex somewhere in there, and so it came to pass that Carrob, the gentle mother amidst, became pregnant. Two times in a row. My young wife watched both of the births. Cappuccino and Sebastian were the Donkeys that came out. I know not in which order. My

wife was 11 and 12, in and around there, and she sat with her sister and her mom (the aforementioned Michelle), both times, and watched Donkeys being born. I can just imagine the scene. Sun setting. Three humans quietly sitting on a fence while one donkey magically becomes two. Cappuccino and Sebastian are reported to have turned out to be much prettier and smoother of coat than their older counterparts on that there farm. This claim could simply be attributed to youth (of both the observer and the observed). Carrob ate the placenta, the afterbirth, after both birthings, and my wife watched, and she would agree that she is the better for having done so. Quite natural, the eating of the placenta. Replenishes the mother with nutrients lost during the child birthing ordeal. Makes perfect sense. I hear it is not uncommon for a post birth gathering of humans to still chew on a slice of placenta, in recognition of this instinctual act. Bravo Humans. Bravo.

There were two Ponies on this farm, during this time, as well. Maybe they are still there...amidst the miniature horses (Ponies ARE miniature horses, RIGHT?). I know not much of their adventures back then, but I simply report their past existence to one, further your understanding of the logistics of the homestead at that time, and two, to tell you of their names. MerryLegs, and TarBucket. Rad. I might not name my kids after them, but any sort of equinal creature in my titular command, you betcha.

So. Chickens and Ducks (the former a giver, the latter a loon).

On this farm, there were about six grown Ducks. Mallards. Half and Half Girls and Boys. They would lay eggs sometimes, the Girl ones (but not nearly as much as the conditioned Chickens), and sometimes those eggs didn't hatch and sometimes the baby ducks were traded in for more chickens for laying those yummy eggs (and to control the farm population). And sometimes mama ducks would take their baby ducks for swims in the little pond that was there on the farm.

There were just over a dozen Hens there on the farm, balanced out by one Rooster. I never asked if any of them had names, those gentle foul (Funny what we give names to).

So, there was a chicken coop there on the farm. A modest wooden structure that existed mainly to keep other animals out, and not so much the chickens in. "a lazy farmer will be made a fool by a hungry anything, come morning." (I just made that up, but I'm sure some form of it can be found in the farm folk vernacular). In the coop were long lengths of pole running wall to wall along the inside of said coop, parallel and in angular line with each other, somewhat like an amphitheatre seating configuration, and the chickens would frantically flutter up and take their places on those perching poles. Amidst the poles would be scattered, smallish buckets and baskets with hay and straw in them, and that is where the hens saw it very natural to lay their eggs, and they would, and the humans would gaffle* the gaggle when the buckets became full. When the night came, the chickens, without fail, would instinctually file into their henhouse, up their poles and onto their perches. The Ducks, they would hang out in the bush nearby the henhouse, as ducks do, and would have to be ushered into the Chicken Building for their own safety. They would sleep on the floor, the ducks, where there would also sit a nesting basket or two, and that is where the ducks would lay their eggs, seeing as it was a

readily available comfortable convenient place. So, the chickens and the ducks slept near their baskets, in their respective places, in their cozy coop, and all was well.

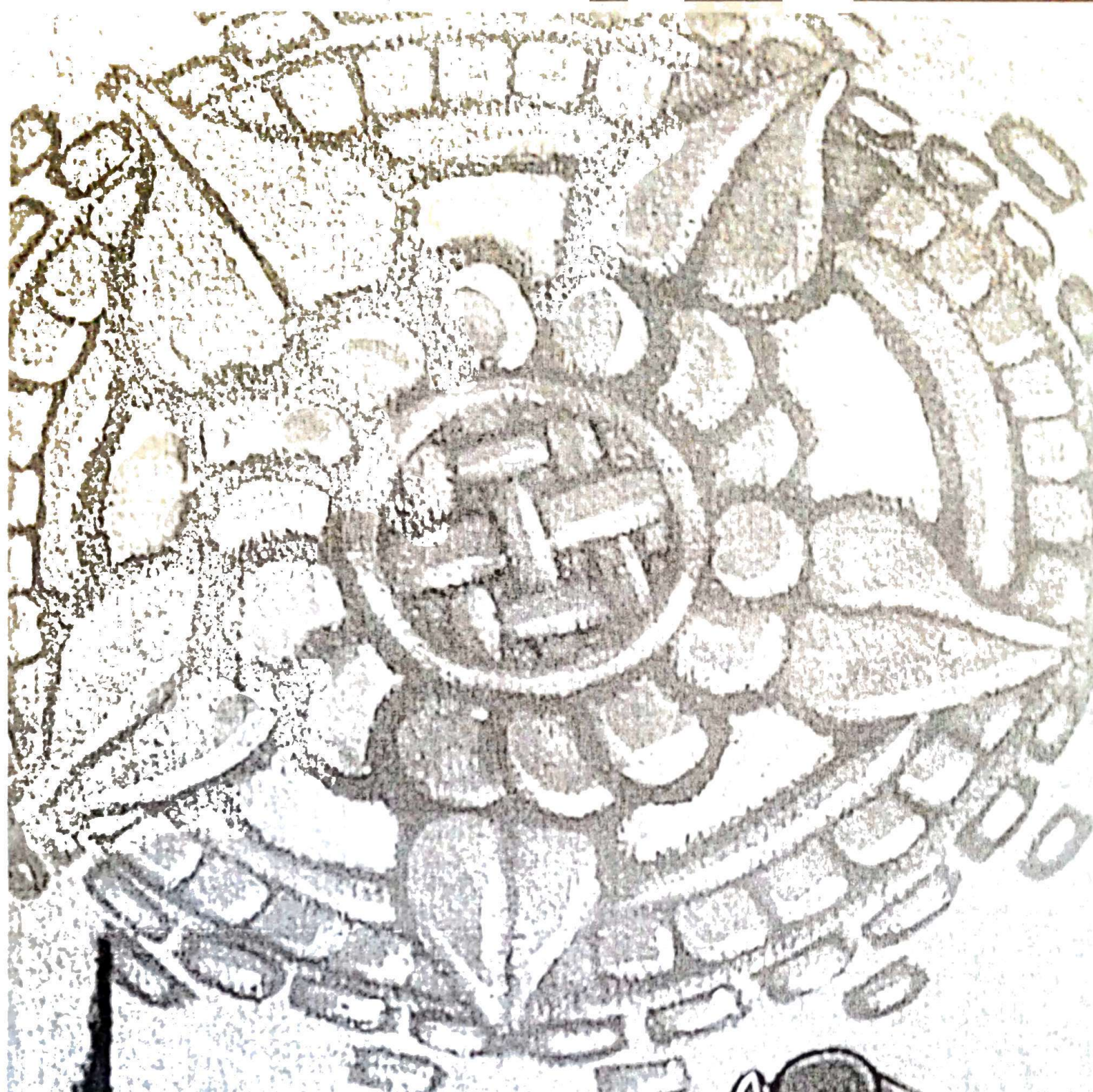
Now, Chicken eggs and Duck eggs are of the same relative shape and size, and, for the most part, color. It's hard to tell them apart. Michelle or Michael or my wife or whomsoever happened to be directing energy towards looking at the eggs in the baskets near where the chickens slept and near where the ducks slept, they probably wouldn't have been able to tell, even if they wanted to, if there were any duck eggs mixed in with the chicken eggs, or vice versa. One day, as if by divine intervention, vice versa happened. A chicken egg was mixed in with some duck eggs in one of the duck nesting baskets. Nobody has any details, but what nature would dictate was that the egg hatched, right around the time that all of the duck eggs hatched. The mama duck, being unable to count and having a very survivalist sort of memory, took it as life itself that this "duckling" was hers, and just happened to look a bit different. She didn't point out to any of the other ducks her funny looking duckling, not that they would have cared, and, since nobody tells chickens anything, the baby chick was born a baby duckling. Amen. One day, as my wife tells it, when the Mama Duck and her babies were waddling to the pond for a swim, it was noticed by the humans that there was indeed a baby chicken walking in line with that Mama's ducks. I don't even know if the chicken was destined to be a Rooster or a Hen, and I suppose it's not important, because it was around that time, when the confused chicken little was waddling with his duck brothers and sisters, that the humans decided to name one of their foul. Howard The Chicken. I completely assume, and you can do the same, that the reference was to Howard the Duck, that beloved 80's cult classic starring the dishy Lea Thompson.

So, Howard the Chicken walked around as a duck in training (thankfully, the chickens and ducks ate the same food, and they were all primarily landlocked). He slept with the Ducks on the floor, got groomed by his Duck Mama. When she would lead her duck babies into the pond for a swim, Howard would follow right in, stumble and squeal and tread in the forbidden water (to the hilarity of the observant humans). They would have to lift Howard out of the pond before he drowned (but, rest assured, this did not stop him, and he tried over and over again). As he grew to Chicken Adulthood, Howard would hang out more and more with the other chickens around the farm. There were many of them and, hell, they spoke his language. Eventually he started sleeping chicken-style, perched on high. And that was that. Howard The Chicken probably even became unrecognizable to the humans (and his old Duck Family), over time, awash in the peep of chickens. Maybe not. He was probably the one that would stare into the pond and ponder (get it, "pond"-er....ha ha ha...ahhhh) a bit longer than any normal chicken would have cause to....

* "Gaffle" taken from 1990's suburban slang meaning, in essence, "to plunder or take advantage of...aggressively procure...etc.".



Poor AI.



tango-ing

you don't know me well enough
to tell my voice is shaking.
that I am as chatty now as I will ever be
in a lifetime.

You can't see that I am pacing around my room
as I hold this phone

fidgeting with the cardboard cylinder
left behind by toilet paper.

I just met you two nights ago
and I'm already thinking—
you, naked

asking for French toast, or a muffin
if you hate eggs.

I ask you about your car
because I saw you driving it once

and it hits me:

to you, conversation
is dancing

more about rhythm than meaning

across long lengths of wire
you gracefully slide and twirl
with premeditated, easy motions,
like the tango.

I am aware—
jolting sharply
missing each beat
that comes and goes
conscious of the shape
of my own smile.

And I have to stop the music
before I lose track of my feet
and fall:

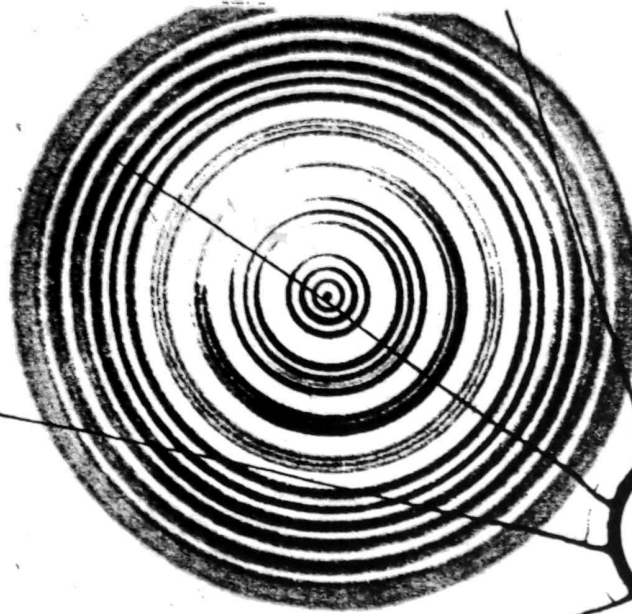
“yeah, so coffee or something...”.

you wait,
out of habit, and then say
something about an oil change
but yes coffee is fine.

and then we do the eternally awkward hang up
which is the final dip I have never known—
“yeah, ok... well, I'll see you tonight”
“ok bye” we say simultaneously

you hanging up before me.

www.devinfarren.com



TOO MANY PIECES

Listen up people,
this is the jigsaw puzzle so far::

Yes we are made by god,
yes we evolved
we were seeded by aliens
who still are involved
but they don't need spaceships, that's primitive shit;
they rip holes in dimensions and glide through undetected
unless you're perceptive and see them like ghosts
while you're brewing your coffee and burning your toast

there also are halflings, ancestors of those who merged
during various times when the gifted were purged
As for subhumans, we've found there are none
there's sentience from amoeba to the core of the nuclear reaction

If there is a task to be completed,
it's a test of wills over millions of centuries
this here's not a battle, it's a speck in the eye of a delirious infantry grunt
bleeding to death slowly in a trench back in 1916

Shanty



salt the rim of your
tallest glass...
mix 3 parts
Miller High Life
to 1 part lemonade...
add some ice
and drink up!

Sacramento Open Mics

SUNDAY

Java Café & Brew *19:00
(Fair Oaks and Madison...in the suburbs)

MONDAY

The Blue Lamp (Alhambra & N) *20:30
The Fox and Goose (10th and R) *19:30
The Speakeasy Lounge (117 J, Old Sac) *20:30

TUESDAY

It's A Grind Coffee Shop *19:00
Sunrise & Cirby, NW Corner, Roseville
G Street Pub, 228 G St., Davis *20:30
Capitol Garage, (15th and K) *20:30

WEDNESDAY

Old Ironsides (10th & S) *20:00
The Distillery (L st., between 22nd and 21st) *22:00

THURSDAY

Coffee Garden *18:45
2904 Franklin Blvd., Sac, 95818
The Cosmic Café - Placerville *19:00
594 Main St., 530-642-8481

Be Brave Bold Robot, 2006 Autumnal,
Sacramento, California, USA, Earth, Solar
System, Galaxy Milky Way, Universe
This One. All pieces property of piece
makers. No reprinting or anything
smarmy like that, please, without
permission, at least. so for that
permission, or to contribute something,
anything (drawings, text, rubbings) or
vent, or confess your sins, please email the
contact at www.bebaveboldrobot.org.
If you would like to post or find out about
quality Sacramento area musical
performances, go to
<http://undietacos.sexyprison.com>.

Please and Thank You. And thanks for
reading Zines. Zines are fun and people
should read them. Sure, some "suck", but
usually it is because they are presented in
such a subjective format that it takes a bit
of exposure, and usually repeated
exposure, to appreciate them, as moods
and appreciation change and flux with
each other and with the weather and with
our individual trials and tribulations. But,
they deserve a chance like anything else,
and you just might find yourself pleasantly
surprised....oh so pleasantly....
contributing awesome people whose
names are not with their pieces: Dean
Haakenson, Jay Howell, Scott Moore,
Andrew Morin, Courtney Richmond,
Michael Rodriguez, Dustin Scharlach, and
Doug Shackey

Effects of boredom

Boredom can be a great enemy in captivity. If the soldier can't find a way to cope, after only four days he will be fearful and apathetic in equal measures.



Stellar comments

exchanged like wedding vows to the eternal hip, mockingly shaded on anonymous cool spring evenings sitting amongst the cigarette butts and iron tables.

Discerned sounds of my friends (or your friends') band, and why so-and-so doesn't do such-and-such and why they aren't somewhere else.

And yeah, sure, whatever, bored is our new slang and we will all be famous or nothing someday.

2- If/When the doubts hit you (like “This is stupid!” or “Why the fuck am I doing this hippie visualization bullshit?” or “I’m too cool for this shit” or “What if this is all a lie and I’m wasting my time for nothing?” or however it manifests), tell the doubts to Fuck Off! You can say, “I’m not going to feel you, doubt! So get out of my head before I cut you out with a paring knife!” or whatever you have to say to acknowledge that you have power over your own doubts. (Even if you don’t think you have power over your own doubts, just act like you do, and stick to the process. It’ll work in time.)

3- Act towards your goal. The combination of acting and projecting is more effective than mere acting alone.

4- Take this whole process with a grain of salt. Not because it’s bullshit, but because when you calm down and don’t take it too seriously, then you don’t project out neurotic energies that cancel out the energies you want to project out. You can laugh about your doubts if you want to, or tell yourself that you are stronger than they are. If you don’t believe that you are stronger than your fears and suspicions, then you must fight these suspicions by not allowing yourself to keep thinking about them

Now, if you’re a junkie and that’s your script, and you’re playing it to the hilt with no regrets, then damn, you are one intense actor, and if that’s what you’re here for, then that’s fine. I just want to let people out there who did not ask for their despair and want out of it that they can get out. This reality is so malleable that nobody is truly stuck. That’s the beauty of being a piece of “God” “The Universe” or whatever or whomever you want to call it. You can totally hypnotize yourself into believing that you are unholy and/or unworthy and/or an unimportant celestial accident, etc. if you want to. It’s totally within your ability. It’s also totally within your ability to change your thought patterns and begin to manifest a different reality if you desire it enough.

sent to me on MySpace, unsolicited from
some guy calling himself “black bean”:

you

you are the bitch in my life
the bristles of my broom
that whisks across the floor
you are the bitch
the bitch that holds my golf clubs
you applaud when I do well
when I walk in a fancy place
and I get my hat and coat taken at the door
you are that bitch

you have been touched



3:00 AM

by Carly Bourne

What is it about this silent hour that makes my thoughts SCREAM with so much power? The world sleeps dreamily, while my brain rushes seamlessly through hopes, wishes, would haves, could haves... I should have stayed, I should have not gone. But perhaps I did the right thing after all, didn't I?

And is this morning wake-up call to the 8 to 5 corporate cash cow clock-watching "job" really what I was meant for? Can this be it? Can this be what all my idealistic, fanciful, utopian dreaming has led me to? Can this be what the wasted hours of childhood spent pouring over books, books, books, while the sun rose and set still ... and I was not outside LIVING, I was inside dying.... So hurried to grow up and play house and punch the clock like a drone... and now I've done it.... I've leaped the not-so-high hurdles and arrived, so unceremoniously, at the pinnacle of my teenage fantasy. Oh how youth is wasted on the young, an old woman laughs, and how true...

And so I've come to that all important CROSSROAD, where there is not really a question of the path less traveled, but the larger, more important question... the path that will let me rest some day in old age, KNOWING that I have done right, that I have chosen the right direction, that I have left my mark, and I can die with little if no regrets.

Because already I feel that death upon me, childhood is long gone, and the big 'a' word LOOMS all around, with every bill that floods the mailbox, every telemarketer that asks for me - not my mother, every day that my car hesitates a bit before finally turning over, every month that my paycheck has been gouged by Social Security and Federal Income Tax, I feel ever more the ADULT that I am.

And I am left then wondering, when did my childhood dreams become naked ambition to succeed, succeed, succeed, no matter what the actual task is, as long as the end result is success with a capital S? And when did I forget the answer to the ultimate, all important QUESTION...

What do you want to be when you grow up?

Well, for one, I certainly DO NOT want to be a grown up.

THE END.

the emperor is under his bed giggling secret orders again.
the servants whisper these words to themselves passing the
edited information one ear to one tongue, their fingers interlaced
with promises.

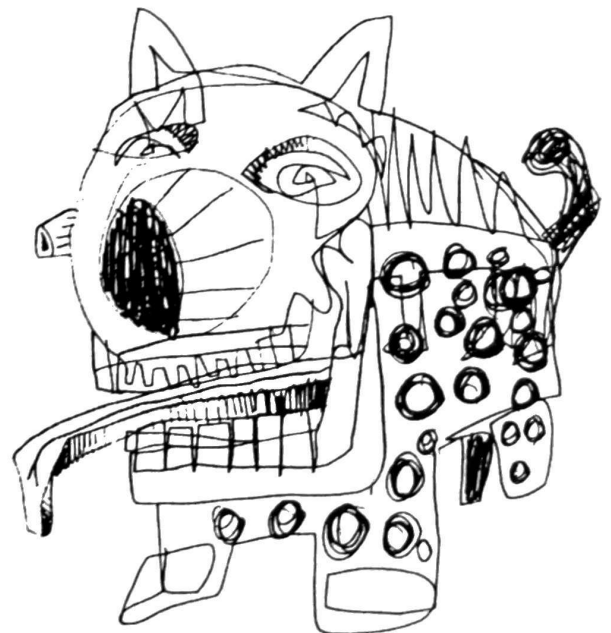
their uniforms repeat like a timeline,
He calls for war. they say
His sweet tooth is moaning. they say

The emperor calls for more wine. They say one ear to one tongue
fingers squeezed one another with desire.

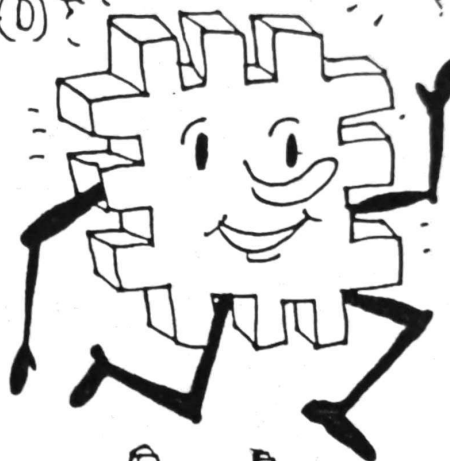
He prophesy a coming fire. they whisper
His robes are purple from spilling. they whisper
the mosaic wall shows gods in endless strife

the last servant is given the message clearly
He calls for his generals. they let their tongue taste the ear
He calls for candy and wine. they let their tongue taste the ear
the fingers separate, the last servant's tongue marked with ballot and fire.
the gods each stand without heal, animal toe and ball balance
the wrestling pose.

Plum bum on silver platter



BE BRAVE
BOLD
ROBOT.



BE BRAVE

